1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives.

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter.

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever.

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child.

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As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

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The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

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The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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those which were valuable enough to be tethered near lodges at night, was considered practically on a par with killing, scalping and counting coups. Capturing weapons and other trophies, as well as taking women and children prisoner, were likewise deserving of praise. Helping fellow-tribesmen in danger and many other types of action such as successful scouting for a war party, or acting as water-carrier under dangerous circumstances, were taken into account in assessing the war record of the individual.

An ambitious man grasped every opportunity for distinguishing himself in as many of these ways as possible, for prestige depended primarily on a reputation for bravery, and competition between warriors was keen.[33] The ideal man was one who had so many war-deeds to his credit that "his wrist would be made slim from being pulled up to recite them." So great was the variety of circumstances under which a recitation of war-deeds was required, that a man who had accomplished little was of necessity ignored and doomed to remain a nonentity.

Furthermore there were many occasions on which those who had given a good account of themselves in battle were singled out for public recognition. During the victory dance, for instance, a warrior, who had remained at home, chose one of the returning party to whom he would offer a ceremonial smoke while singing his praises. Again, the relatives of a man who had behaved with particular heroism might decide to formally bestow a new name upon him. In such a case, a group of men and women would approach the lodge where the naming ceremony was held, calling attention to the hero by loudly singing there. To show his appreciation of the honor the hero gave valuable presents to the singers. If a group approached a second time, the honor was doubled and so were the presents. In illustration, the story was told of a woman who was on one occasion so outstandingly brave during battle that she was accorded the same honor a man would have been under the same circumstances,—she was given a new name, that of Woman Chief, and her praises were sung by three groups. Moreover, it was customary at the social dances of the Stars and of the Wolf-men, to compose songs referring to specific deeds of their members respectively, and to sing these over and over again.

[33] For this and other aspects of status, see also pp. 32-33.

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572 602 522 to play jokes, but I would get even with him by going over to his lodge when I would hear him abusing his wife. He had to stop when I came in there because if I actually caught him at it, I could dub him a wife-beater or worse in public."

562 572 602 While in most instances the enemy-friendship was initiated by men, women occasionally obtained war trophies on their own, and had the same privilege. The following, told by Singer, illustrates how she herself came by some war trophies and the manner in which she disposed of them. "One time, when the Piegan had attacked us and the Gros Ventres were pursuing them, I dashed out with some of my women relatives. We came upon three Piegan who had just been killed. Those other women stopped to hit them but I rode by more slowly and spotted some booty near one of the bodies. I dismounted and picked up a nail-studded belt to which was attached a scabbard containing a knife and a nicely beaded gun case. I didn't want to show these to the others, but when they taunted me because I failed to count coups as they had done, I showed them this belt. One of them grabbed the scabbard, which I had intended to give to my own husband, saying: 'You are giving me this. Now we are enemy-friends!' To my nephew I later gave the gun case, saying as I threw it down in front of him: 'Here. You could have this for your gun. This is what I took in war.' The knife I threw down in front of my grandmother and, because we were now enemy-friends, I used a 'bad' name for her —I called her 'you who don't wipe your behind.'"

posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was considered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told *their daughters to be respectful to their husbands.* When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands.

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on.

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian.

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already

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made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

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Daylight and her sister, who were married, for a short while after their first husband died, to his classificatory brother. The other concerned an outstanding woman, Woman Chief, who was said to have been so highly valued by her husband's people that "she was kept in his family by marrying her to three brothers [successively]."

Regulations

Marriage was prohibited for those related by blood, no matter how remote the tie. If, however, a couple were in "good faith," so to speak, and it was discovered later on that they were distant kin, it was not considered necessary for them to separate on that account.[4] Affinal relatives were likewise barred as possible marriage partners, except those who were classified as in-laws of the same generation.[5] In other words, the levirate and sororate were permitted, so that any who addressed each other as brother-in-law and sister-in-law respectively were possible mates, but relatives-by-marriage in any other category were prohibited from contracting marriage. The far-reaching effects of this latter regulation can be seen from the following case. "Not so many years ago, a Gros Ventre woman was the subject of a great deal of gossip because she married late in life a man who, many years previously, had for a time been married to a widow of her maternal uncle. People didn't like it and thought she shouldn't have married that man, even though times had changed and the whites wouldn't count them as being related to each other at all."

Arrangements

As a rule, marriage arrangements were made between the husband-to-be and one or other of the bride's male kinsmen,—father, uncle or brother. Either side could take the initiative, but the bride herself was not consulted. Coming Daylight summed up the prevailing attitude in this way: "When I was young, a girl's life was not her own. When a girl was about seven she was sent away from her home to a grandmother or widowed aunt to be trained to do a woman's work.

[4] See also the discussion of band affiliation and exogamy, pp. 29–31.

[5] For kinship classification, see pp. 124–25.

584 trained to do a woman's work. Then when she was ten or eleven
562 she was handed over to some man. They thought that if they gave her to her husband when she was so young she would get attached to him and make him a good wife. The Gros Ventres didn't
[587] want a woman to get in the habit of running around with different men, so a woman's folks worried if she was unmarried too long [after being divorced or widowed] because she might do something bad."

587 There is some evidence that as a woman became older, if she had occasion to remarry, she was somewhat more free to express her choice, although presumably a male relative would still be in the position of making the actual decision. It was said that
584 younger men, especially those seeking to marry "older" women,
832 "were afraid of their tongues" and felt more confident of success in possession of "love medicine." Al Chandler, for instance, was offered a love charm which he refused, but the speech of his uncle on that occasion throws some light on a situation of this kind. His uncle had told him: "Now you are a young man and you will be thinking about women. Maybe you want to get married and have picked out a woman and she doesn't want you. Maybe you are not good enough for her and, when you ask her, she will run you down plenty. Some women are swell-heads and can make a man feel cheap. It hurts a fellow to hear things like that—but that is what this charm is for. You take this and keep it in your pocket safely and do not show it to anyone or let anyone know you have it. Now if this woman hurts your feelings, go at night to where she lives and watch carefully, being sure you have the right one. Then when she goes out of the lodge to relieve herself, watch her so you can locate the exact spot. Then open this little packet and dip in it the tip of a little sliver of wood. Go over to the spot and stick the sliver right in the ground on the spot where she urinated and walk away. That is all you have to do, and in a very short time this woman will come running after you. You tell her: 'What are you doing that for? I don't want you.' She will get so anxious that she will beg you to have her."

585 Regardless of whether the man were the suitor, or whether the woman's relatives offered her in marriage, the marriage was validated through presents given by the groom. Traditionally at

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together!' so I jumped up and ran as hard as I could. Finally after wandering around a long time, not caring whether I lived or died, a man on horseback caught up with me. Telling me how dangerous it was to be out alone on account of possible capture by the enemy, he persuaded me to go back. Nobody said anything to me directly, but one of my husband's relatives did take up for me by saying insultingly to my husband: 'You would have such a one for a boss wife. She is ugly, and has a shaggy head, and she doesn't even know how to do a woman's work properly—blood runs out of the meat she prepares!' The older wife left me alone after that incident." 595

Nevertheless Singer admitted that in spite of her unhappy life with co-wives in two or three of her marriages, when she was married to Iron Bucket, she and her "rival" cooperated very nicely and were never jealous of each other or quarrelsome. All the women too agreed that, while the husband did not approve of hair-pulling and "jaw-fights" among his wives, and could resort to stern measures to prevent it, there were many polygynous households where peace and harmony reigned.

Authority of the Husband

The husband was expected to assume complete responsibility for his wife and had the right to enforce obedience. It was perhaps inevitable that some men used their authority in an arbitrary manner. The following was one among many examples offered in proof of this point. "There was a man who was known to be very stingy. On one occasion his wife cooked more meat than he thought she should have prepared. He was very angry with her and, in order to punish her, he made a big pile of the meat and forced her to eat every scrap of it. It made her very sick and she had to vomit a couple of times before she could get it all down. But she preferred to be sick rather than to get a beating." 593 562

It was said that wife-beating was very common and that in many cases it was unjustified. Singer gave part of her own experience as a sample. "My husband wouldn't allow me to go anywhere away from the lodge except to do the necessary jobs of getting wood and water. The whole time I was married to him I attended only one celebration. That time he more or less had to let

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S93 S62 me go because by mother's brother was in the Sacrifice Dance and I was supposed to be there to give things away in his honor. He was mean about it, but I got to that one thing. Another time though, I was scraping hides and I heard it announced in the camp circle that a relative of mine had been killed at war. Of course I went right away to mourn for him. But when I got back, my husband was furious. He yelled at me: 'You ought to stay home and attend to your work!' and then gave me an awful beating."

It was usually of little avail for a woman to return home with grievances against her husband because it was assumed that a wife deserved the type of treatment she received. Generally her S93 family would send her back to her husband promptly and often S86 with a present for him to show their good will. Only under exceptional circumstances was the wife allowed to initiate separation from her husband. If he grossly neglected her and showed his indifference openly, she might be permitted to remain with her family. Should the husband not send for her, they were then free to arrange for her another marriage. Coming Daylight gave as an example her own experience, which was considered as somewhat unusual. "My uncle had arranged as our third marriage for my younger sister and me to go to a man who later turned out to be a poor provider. He seldom got buffalo meat, and he didn't water the horses, or do the other things he was supposed to. He was so busy chasing other women he didn't have time for anything else! One day, however, a friend of his came and told us that our husband was planning to publicly throw us away. His uncle came to see our husband that same day and tried to persuade him not to do it. Among other things he told him: 'You have such nice quiet industrious women. Just think of all the robes they have dressed for you!' But our husband just sat there with his head bowed and didn't say anything, and we knew then that he was going to do it. So I told my sister when he went out: 'We will get ready and throw him away before he has a chance.' I had a horse of my own, and we packed all our belongings as quickly as possible and went back to our uncle. When he found out what that man was going to do, of course he didn't make us go back. Our husband was in the wrong. He didn't

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'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'" 684 558

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation. 684 586

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman 595 562

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suffered injustice, but they insisted that the disciplinary power of the husband "made good wives of many women." In spite of the fact that many cases were given in illustration of harsh treatment, not a few were mentioned in which husband and wife lived happily together in an atmosphere of mutual esteem and deep affection. Coming Daylight herself, for instance, experienced what could be considered an ideal marriage with her first husband, Dressed in White.

Extra-marital Affairs

Girls were instructed before marriage to expect and condone infidelity on the part of the husband. An ambivalent attitude prevailed in that a man's reputation was said to have suffered if he were known as one who was "always fooling around with other men's wives"; yet brave young men were expected to make as many conquests as possible.

There were few women who escaped their husband's suspicion at one time or another. The reasons why the suspicion was often justified were given by Singer to have been the following. "Too often young girls were given in marriage to old men for whom they did not care and to whom they never got attached; so when younger men more to their liking came along, lots of these girls gave in to them and took chances of getting caught by their husbands. But even if a woman liked her husband and he was real good to her, when she saw that he was running around with other women, she might be jealous and want to 'make her life bad' just to get even with him."

While a woman could not count on her mother, or aunt, or sister-in-law to help along her illicit love affair, in some cases a grandmother, or sister, or friend might assist her in making assignations with the lover and would do their best to shield her from her husband. It was said that others were sympathetic especially if the lover were known as a brave man. In fact there were two sets of circumstances in which public opinion was lenient almost to the point of approval, although great discretion was necessary to avoid the husband's suspicion, since he still had the right of punishing his wife if he found her out. One kind of situation concerned the woman who sent a man out to accomplish some specific

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven 793 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The 624 Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal de- [562] gree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as átsa'an, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

796 178 555 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of beginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had 554 physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 178 562 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
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the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.[1] The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society?

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887.

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words.

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Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones, gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide. Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence than Coming Dayling had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother. Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying: "Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit subsequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions, if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport. She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assiniboine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Daylight saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead

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and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigmann's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

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